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ABSTRACT

The quick-writing activity described in this lesson plan guides grades K-2 students to write a simple cinquain as a follow-up to a subject they have been exploring in class. During the one 60-minute lesson, students will: write a poem about another topic, using the cinquain graphic organizer or outline; use words learned in the current thematic unit in poems they write. The instructional plan, a list of web resources, student assessment/reflection activities, and a list of National Council of Teachers of English/International Reading Association (NCTE/IRA) Standards addressed in the lesson are included. Six cinquain graphic organizers and a cinquain reflections sheet are attached. (PM)

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Composing Cinquain Poems: A Quick-Writing Activity

ED 477 993

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Grade Band

K-2

Estimated Lesson Time

One 60-minute session

Overview

Cinquain (pronounced "cin-kain") is a five-line poetic form, using a wavelike syllable count of two-four-six-eight-two. In this lesson, students write simple cinquain of their own as a follow-up to a subject they have been exploring in class.

Resource are available to support units on animals, community, fairy tales, healthy foods, and rainforest/habitats. Additionally, students might write cinquain after reading a particular picture book, such as *Amazing Grace*, or based on a picture book of the student's choice.

From Theory to Practice

In Apol and Harris's article ("Joyful Noises: Creating Poems for Voices and Ears." *Language Arts* 76.4 (March 1999): 314-322), one of the ways teachers build interest in poetry is by using magnetic words to create original poems. This exercise is one of several scaffolding experiences that the teachers use to "lead students beyond a superficial encounter to a deeper understanding and appreciation of poetry" (316). Through reading cinquain and then writing their own, students move from simply reading the poems to analyzing the poems and, ultimately, composing their own poems that match the format.

Student Objectives

Students will

- write a poem about another topic, using the cinquain graphic organizer or outline.
- use words learned in the current thematic unit in poems they write.

Resources

- Apple Graphic Organizer (English & Spanish examples)
- Apple Graphic Organizer (English example)
- Dalmatian Graphic Organizer
- Firefighter Graphic Organizer
- Frog Prince Graphic Organizer
- Amazing Grace Graphic Organizer
- Monkey/Rainforest Graphic Organizer

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- Cinquain Reflections Worksheet
- Bringing Poetry and Children Together
- Serious Play: Reading Poetry with Children

Instructional Plan

Resources

- Apple Graphic Organizer (English & Spanish examples)
- Apple Graphic Organizer (English example)
- Dalmatian Graphic Organizer
- Firefighter Graphic Organizer
- Frog Prince Graphic Organizer
- *Amazing Grace* Graphic Organizer
- Monkey/Rainforest Graphic Organizer
- Cinquain Reflections Worksheet
- Bringing Poetry and Children Together
- Serious Play: Reading Poetry with Children

Preparation

Make copies of worksheets for students as necessary.

This lesson can accompany a variety of themes in the K-2 classroom. Examples (linked above) are included that fit the following units:

1. Animals (Dalmatian, Monkey)
2. Your Community (Firefighter)
3. Fairy Tales (Frog Prince)
4. Picture Book Characters (*Amazing Grace*)
5. Halloween Costumes (Firefighter)
6. Habitats (Monkey/Rainforest)
7. Healthy Foods (Apple—in English & Spanish)

Instruction and Activities

1. Share examples of cinquain with your students. using the student reproducible of sample cinquains or poems that you have written yourself on the topic that your students are exploring is also available.

2. You or the students might read the poems aloud. Try reading some of the cinquain more than once to show how different words can be emphasize and to talk about line breaks. See "Joyful Noises: Creating Poems for Voices and Ears" for more information on reading poetry aloud.

3. Outline the cinquain (below) for students on the board or using the graphic organizer:

   To begin, choose an person, place, or thing to write your cinquain about.

   Line 1: One word that tells what the poem is about
   Line 2: Two words that describe the subject
   Line 3: Three words that describe something the subject does
   Line 4: Four to six words describing the subject further
   Line 5: One or two words that rename what the poem is about (a synonym)

   Here's an example:

Dalmatian
spotted, happy
running, barking, jumping
a wagging tail on the end
Fire Dog!

(See graphic organizers for more examples)

4. Once you and your students discuss the poems, students can use one of the Student Reproducible Cinquain Graphic Organizer to compose original poems of their own. Students can work individually, with partners, or in small groups.
5. Once students have finished their poems, the cinquains can be shared with the entire class.

Extensions

- Make stapleless books out of the cinquain.
- Illustrate the cinquain on a sheet of paper with colored pencils or fine-line markers.
- Create a bulletin board or school website anthology of your cinquain.

Web Resources

Serious Play: Reading Poetry with Children
http://www.poets.org/exh/Exhibit.cfm?prmID=10
This site has tips that help "translate [students'] energy, once aroused and captured, into the desire to read poetry seriously, to do the intellectual work necessary to gain a basic mastery of the literary art." The site includes excerpts to recommended poems and excerpts books on teaching poetry to children by Jim Trelease, and by Kenneth Koch.

Bringing Poetry and Children Together
http://www.ncte.org/elem/Cyberbriefs/poetry.shtml
This teacher's tip sheet shares tips for bringing poetry into the classroom with specific methods that you can use immediately with students as well as suggestions for poetry to share and resources where you can learn more

Student Assessment/Reflections

While students work, use kidwatching techniques to observe and monitor students' progress.

Once the activity is completed, provide verbal feedback as individuals or groups share their work with the class. Commentary might focus on the students' feelings about the person, place , or thing described in the cinquain (e.g., "Your poem suggests that you really love your dog. Was it hard to choose just what to say in just five lines?), particularly interesting word choice (e.g., "You choose the word stubborn to describe your dog. Can you tell me something stubborn that your dog has done recently?"), and your own reaction or connection to the poems (e.g., "Your poem reminds me of my first dog, Taffi. Especially when you say that your dog is "a playful bundle of trouble." That's a good description of a puppy.")

After students have shared their cinquain with the class, students could reflect on their own and their classmates's poems. Students could discuss their reactions out loud or use the cinquain reflections worksheet to record their thoughts.

NCTE/IRA Standards

4 - Students adjust their use of spoken, written, and visual language (e.g., conventions, style, vocabulary) to communicate effectively with a variety of audiences and for different purposes.

6 - Students apply knowledge of language structure, language conventions (e.g., spelling and punctuation), media techniques, figurative language, and genre to create, critique, and discuss print and nonprint texts.

11 - Students participate as knowledgeable, reflective, creative, and critical members of a variety of literacy communities.

12 - Students use spoken, written, and visual language to accomplish their own purposes (e.g., for learning, enjoyment, persuasion, and the exchange of information).

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Name_____

Date_____

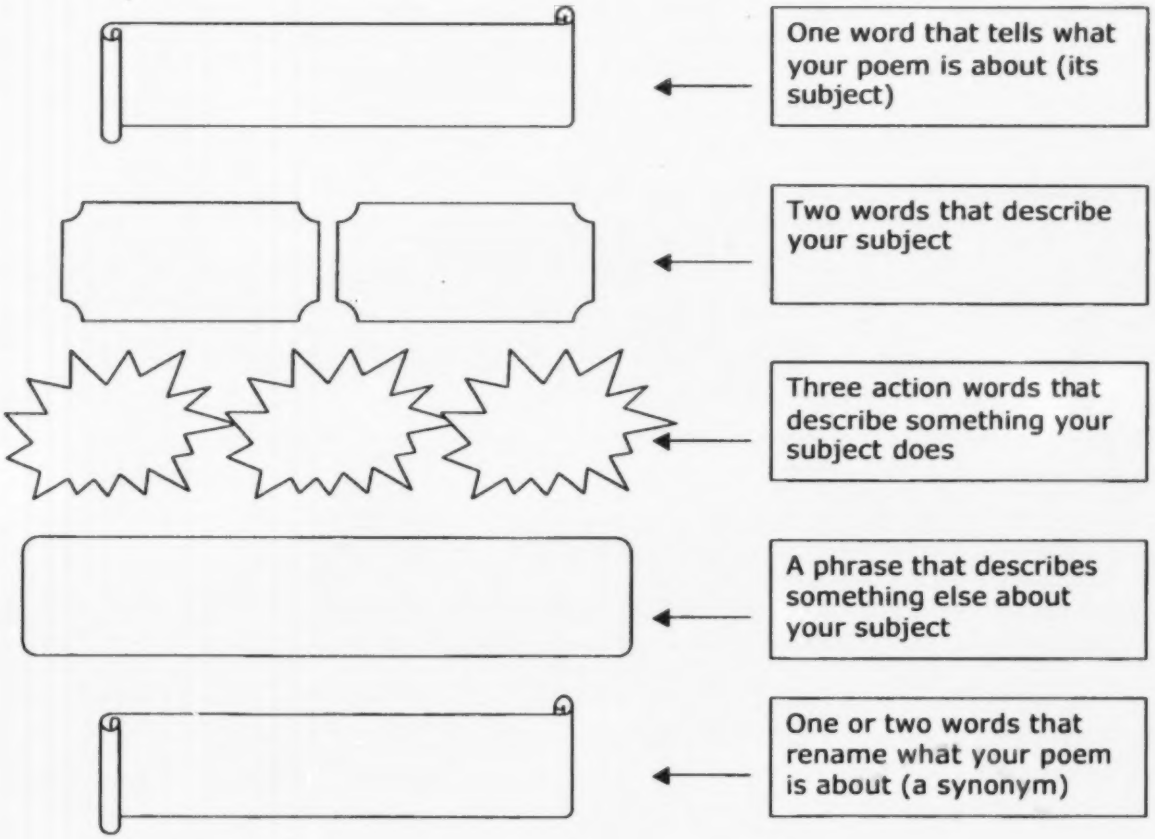
Cinquain Graphic Organizer

A cinquain is a five-line poem that describes a person, place, or thing.

Apple
Red, Shiny
Biting, Chewing, Picking
Do Not Eat the Seeds
Manzana

Manzana
Rojo, Brillante
Mordiendo, Masticando, Recogiendo
No comes las semillas
Apple

Use this organizer to write your own cinquain.


One word that tells what your poem is about (its subject)
Two words that describe your subject
Three action words that describe something your subject does
A phrase that describes something else about your subject
One or two words that rename what your poem is about (a synonym)

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Name_____

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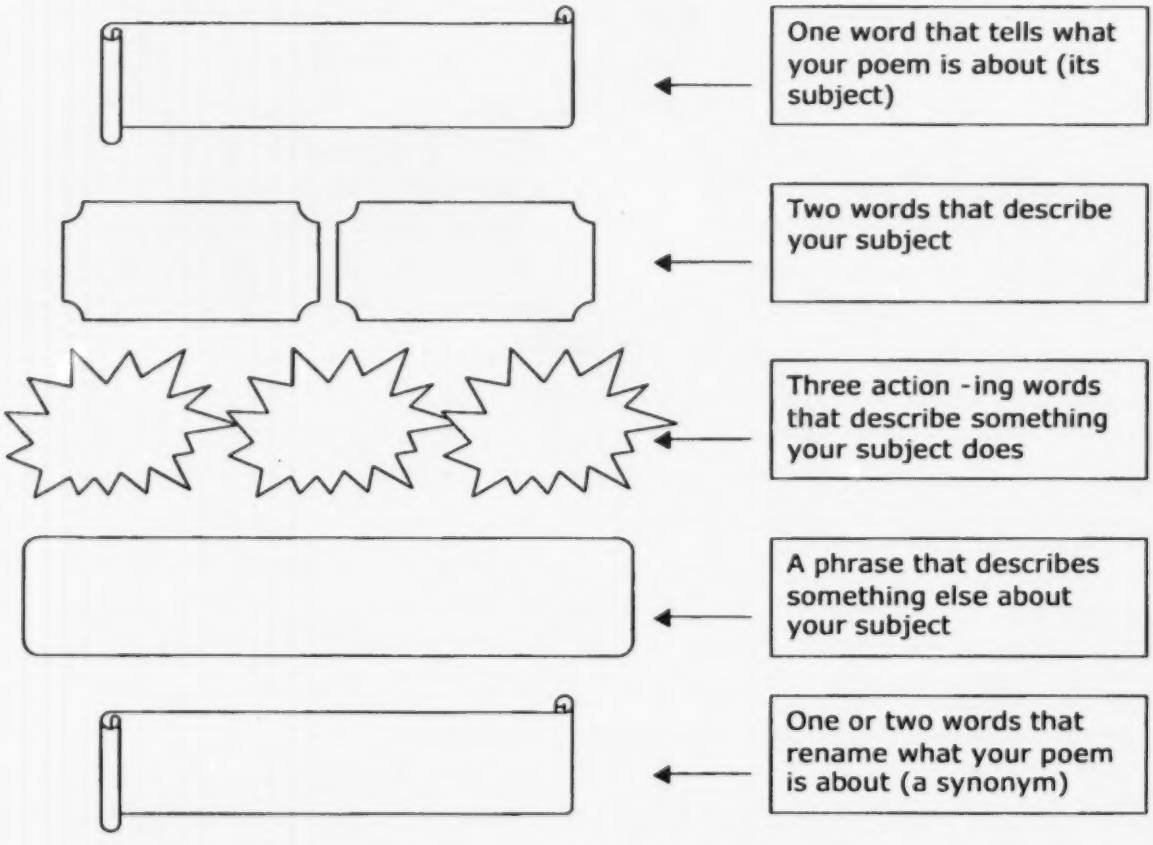
Cinquain Graphic Organizer

A cinquain is a five-line poem that describes a person, place, or thing.

Apple
Red, Shiny
Biting, Chewing, Bobbing
Do Not Eat the Seeds
Snack!

Use this organizer to write your own cinquain.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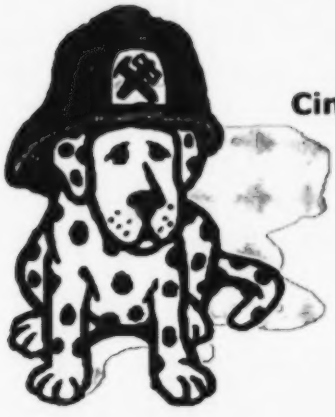
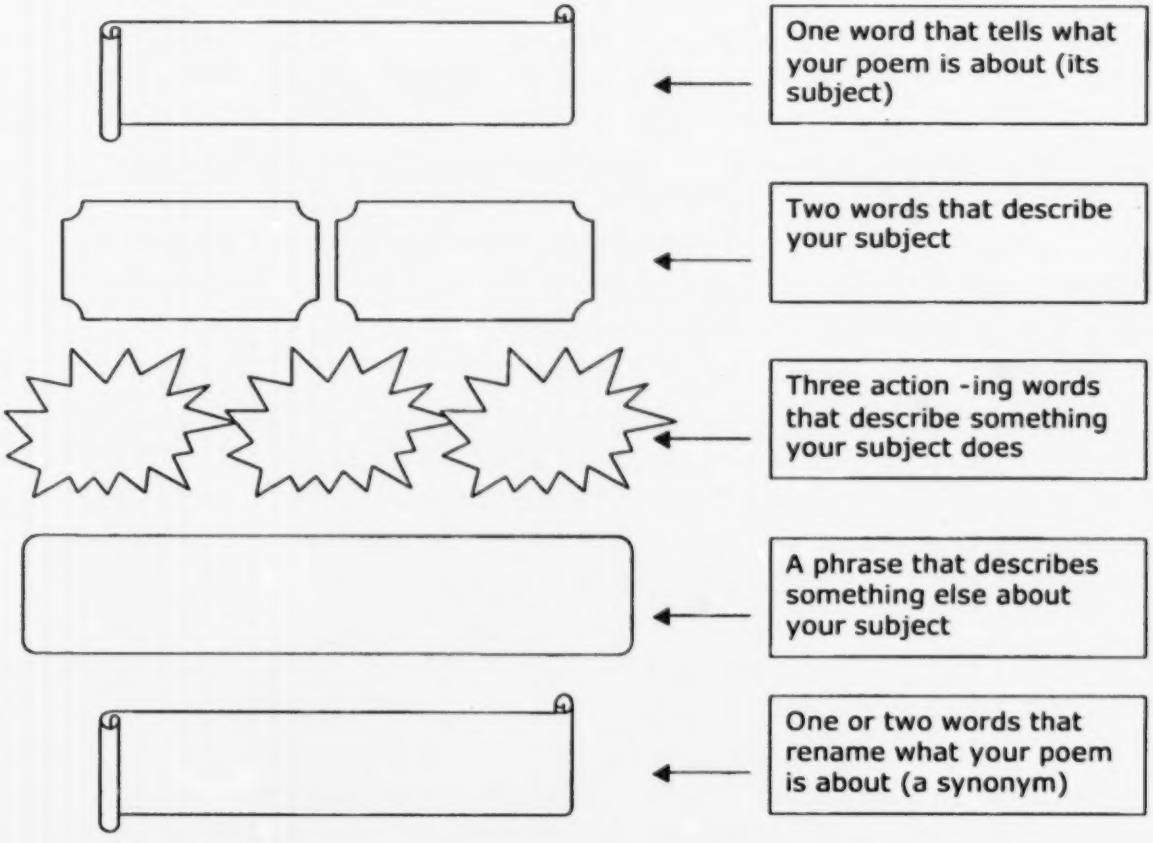


Cinquain Graphic Organizer

A cinquain is a five-line poem that describes a person, place, or thing.

Dalmatian
Spotted, Happy
Running, Barking, Jumping
A Wagging Tail on the End
Fire Dog!

Use this organizer to write your own cinquain.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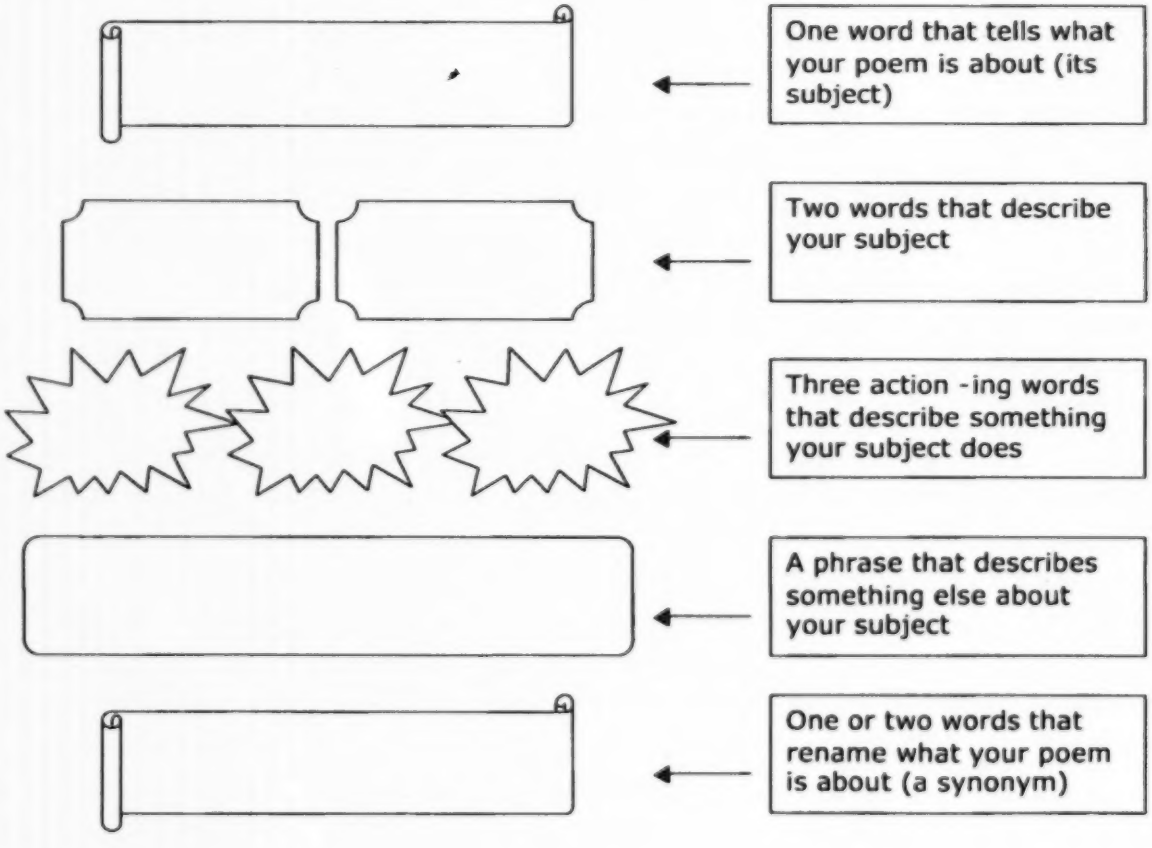
Date_____

Cinquain Graphic Organizer

A cinquain is a five-line poem that describes a person, place, or thing.

Firefighter
Brave, Smart
Saving, Climbing, Rescuing
Spraying Water from a Hose
Hero

Use this organizer to write your own cinquain.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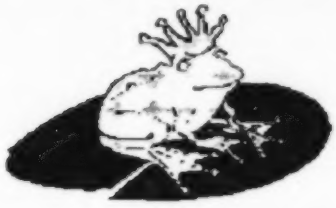
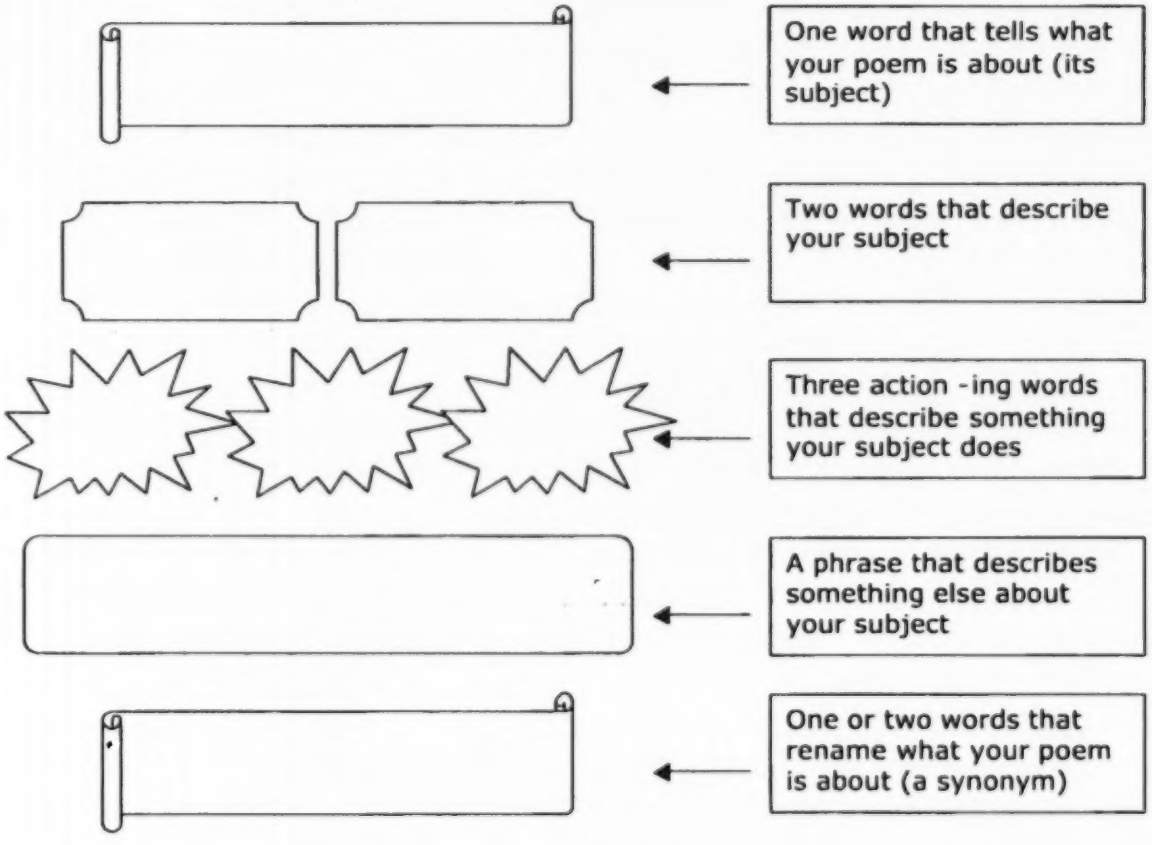


Frog
Green, Handsome
Hopping, Jumping, Leaping
Gives Someone a Kiss
Prince

Use this organizer to write your own cinquain.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Name_____

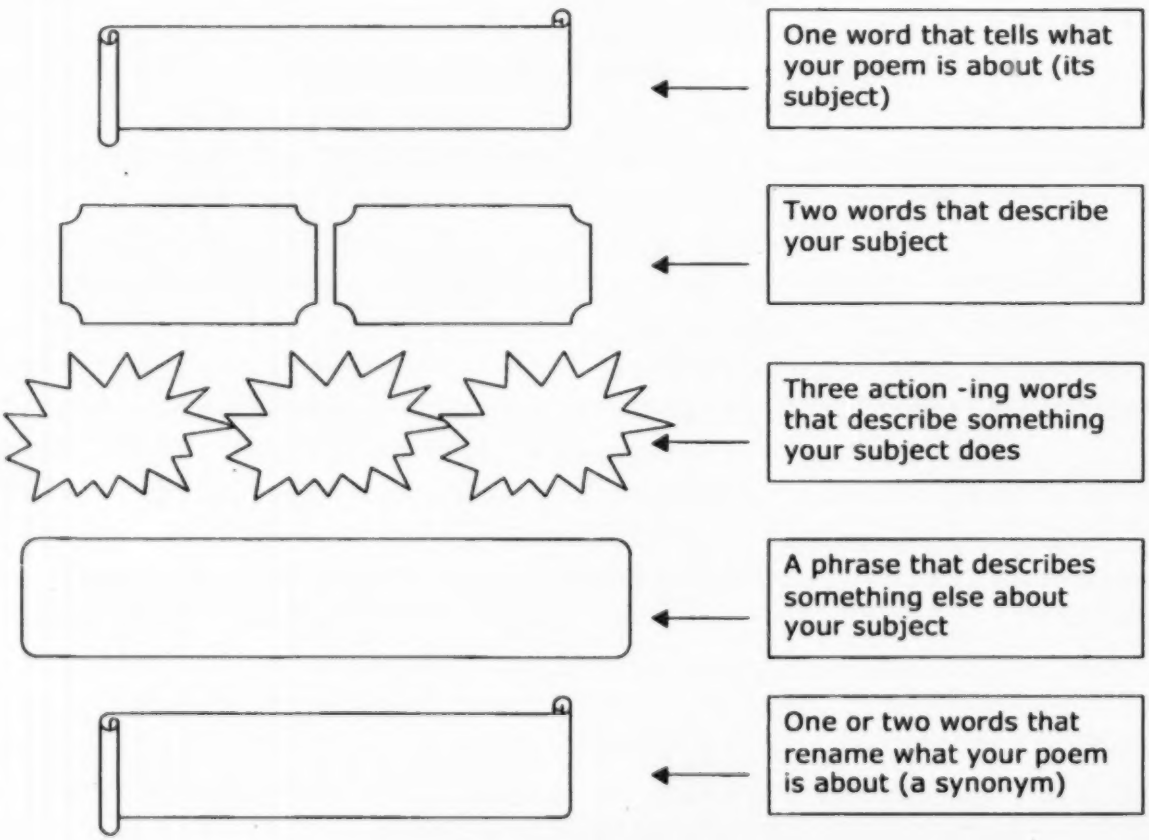
Date_____

Cinquain Graphic Organizer

A cinquain is a five-line poem that describes a person, place, or thing.

Grace
Amazing, Smart
Acting, Dancing, Flying
Anything She Wants To Be
Grace

Use this organizer to write your own cinquain.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Name_____

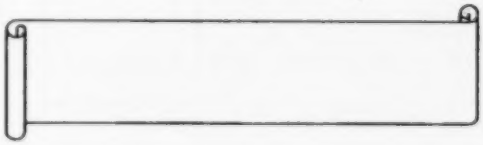
Date_____

Cinquain Graphic Organizer

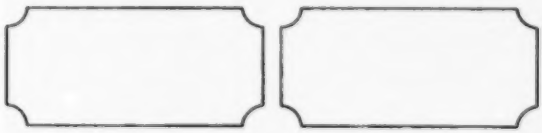
A cinquain is a five-line poem that describes a person, place, or thing.

Rainforest
Wet, Noisy
Dripping, Climbing, Swinging
Monkeys Playing in the Canopy
Habitat

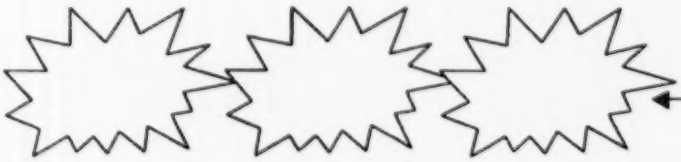
Use this organizer to write your own cinquain.



One word that tells what your poem is about (its subject)

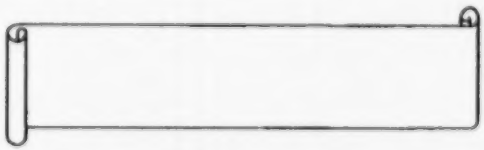


Two words that describe your subject



Three action -ing words that describe something your subject does

A phrase that describes something else about your subject



One or two words that rename what your poem is about (a synonym)

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Cinquain Reflections Worksheet

1. What do you like most about your poem?

2. If you could change something about the poem, what would you change?

3. Of the poems that you heard when we shared our cinquain, which poems did you like best and why?

4. What will you do differently the next time you write a poem?

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